

NEWS RELEASE

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City of Nanaimo Park Ambassador Program Expands

Meeting the Needs of Parks Users during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Summary

To continue the efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19, the City of Nanaimo Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture is expanding its Park Ambassador Program by sending out additional trained Park Ambassadors to more of Nanaimo's parks. These new areas include Bowen Park, Neck Point Park and Colliery Dam Park, as well as smaller parks, trails and beaches. Westwood Lake Park and the downtown waterfront areas including Maffeo Sutton Park were tested during the pilot program, and will continue to be part of the program.

The Park Ambassador program is intended to create awareness of the importance of practicing physical distancing while in the parks or on the trails, as well as share other health-related actions that individuals can take to stay healthy and safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Park Ambassadors are the "eyes and ears" for the park and will respond to issues as they arise. Additional responsibilities include the removal of litter, disinfecting of high touch points, invasive plant removal, minor graffiti removal and reporting any instances of social disorder.

These ambassadors can easily be identified by the public. They are wearing bright yellow Parks, Recreation and Culture vests.

Strategic Link: The City of Nanaimo is committed to the safety and well-being of its residents.

Key Points

- Social/physical distancing has been shown to be effective in preventing the community spread of COVID-19.
- City Park Ambassadors are not authorized to detain an individual as a result of a contravention or suspected contravention to a Public Health Order. They are also not authorized to issue a fine or penalty associated with a breach of the public health orders.
- The public is reminded that even though parks and trails are open, playgrounds, tennis courts, pickle ball courts, gated off-leash dog parks, basketball courts, skateboard parks and other outdoor amenities remain closed.

Quotes

"Due to the success of the pilot program at Westwood Lake Park and the downtown Waterfront, the City of Nanaimo is expanding the program to other popular parks as part of our efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19. Please look for our well trained and friendly staff dressed in bright yellow vests in a park near you."

Art Groot
Director, Facility & Parks Operations
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- There are no Public Health Orders from the Government of BC requiring the public to maintain physical distancing outside their own homes; however, the Province has provided strong recommendation and guidance for physical distancing.
- Physical distancing is defined as being at least two metres (6 feet) away from anybody who is not part of your household.

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